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## CROP OUTLOOK FOR EUROPE AND THE SOVIET UNION

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The general crop outlook in Europe, in spite of dry hot weather in Western Europe, from mid-June to mid-July continues to be relatively favorable, according to the monthly survey of the Office of Foreign Agricultural Relations, U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The ripening and harvesting of winter crops and first cuttings of hay benefited from the dry period. Spring-sown crops suffered, but rains during the third week of July did much to revive them. At the same time, cool and rainy weather retarded crops in parts of central and eastern Europe, and heavy rains delayed harvesting in some southern areas. The cool and rainy weather zone extended into the Soviet Union, covering most of European Russia, including southern Ukraine.

The net effect of these weather conditions on the over-all production prospects for Europe was slight, and a relatively favorable season for most crops is indicated. It is still estimated that the breadgrain output in Europe, exclusive of the Soviet Union, will be about 5 percent below the 1948 level and over 10 percent below the 1935-39 average. While any deterioration in the prospects for coarse grains in the west may have been offset by improved prospects in the east, it continues to seem unlikely that production of these grains will show much change from last year. Rice output probably will drop, largely because of a decrease in acreage planted.

Roots and tubers in Western Europe have benefited by recent rains but more moisture is needed. On the basis of current conditions, the high yields of last year probably will not be reached. The lower sugar beet yields now in prospect are partly offset by an increase in acreage. Potato acreage as well as anticipated yields are down.

Hay of high quality was harvested in western areas where sunny, dry weather prevailed in June, while high yields, rather than high quality, resulted in eastern areas because of cool rainy weather. Pastures suffered in the dry areas of western Europe but recent rains revived them and improved the prospects for second cuttings of hay.

Most European countries report a very good outlook for this year's fruit crop. Olive oil output is also expected to be much larger than last year.

In the Soviet Union, good crop prospects may be offset in part by large harvesting losses. Continued wide-spread rains and cool weather during the first part of July have retarded the ripening of grain and threaten to increase the unusually heavy harvesting losses in Russia, thus reducing the barn outturn of grain and other crops.

A summary of crop conditions by countries follows:

#### WESTERN EUROPE

United Kingdom: Extended dryness from early June to the middle of June adversely affected spring-sown crops, but subsequent widespread rains have improved the outlook somewhat. Winter grains are in good condition, and the yield of wheat is expected to compare favorably with the relatively high yields of recent years, but to be below 1948. Yields of potatoes, sugar beets, and spring grains are expected to be lower than last year's high yields. Coupled with reduced acreage, the outlook is for some decline in production of grain and potatoes as compared with last year's very good harvest. Pastures which had been in poor condition were revived by the recent rains, but the drought had reduced production of livestock and livestock products, particularly of milk. Fruit crops made favorable progress during June, and production prospects are mostly above last year but below the record crops of 1947.

Ireland: Crop prospects which were promising a month ago had deteriorated in some parts of the country because of excessive dryness in June. However, the condition of winter wheat and barley continued generally satisfactory. Oats and spring wheat suffered from drought and root crops were behind last year. Hay yields were below average but of good quality. Pastures had also been damaged by drought. In mid-July general rains benefited growing crops.

Belgium: Recent rains gave temporary relief from the prolonged dry spell which persisted during the second half of June and the first half of July. Pastures, sugar beets and potatoes need more rain, however. Cereals crops are up to or better than last year's good harvest. The first cutting of hay was smaller than that of 1948, but of much better quality due to good harvesting weather. The potato crop is likely to be considerably below the 1948 record crop, while the fruit crop is expected to be outstanding.

Netherlands: Precipitation during the month of June was below normal. Crop conditions are largely satisfactory, but additional moisture is needed to prevent deterioration of pastures, sugar beets, potatoes and vegetables. The condition of grain crops at the beginning of July was generally slightly better than conditions a year ago, with the exception of winter rye and winter barley. Present condition figures are also higher for potatoes and sugar beets. With sugar beet acreage greatly increased, a very large sugar production is in prospect. The condition of apples, pears and small fruits continues excellent.

France: The crop outlook as of July 15 was less promising than the favorable prospect of a month earlier. Hot, dry weather during the last three weeks of June has continued through the first three weeks of July, except for a small northwestern coastal area, and has lowered

prospects for grain production. Roots and tubers have deteriorated since mid-July and need rain badly. The hay cut in June was small, though of excellent quality, and second crop prospects are poor. Pastures are in bad condition almost everywhere. The outlook for fruit continues good.

### NORTHERN EUROPE

Denmark: A grain harvest of record proportions is in prospect, with recent estimates indicating that the crop may even exceed the previous record crop of 1938. Yields of root crops are expected to be about the same as last year, while hay and grass are much better than in 1948.

Sweden: Though precipitation was below normal in June, crop prospects in early July were said to be normal or above normal for grains, oil crops, potatoes, and sugar beets. Hay fields and pastures were said to show some retardation due to effects of previous dry weather in parts of the country, but there was relief provided in some areas by recent heavy rains. The fruit crop outlook continues good.

Norway: Weather conditions were favorable during the first half of June, but during the second half of the month continued cold winds retarded plant growth. The present outlook is for somewhat below normal yields of both grains and root crops. Because harvests come late in this country, weather conditions during the remainder of the growing season could still change this outlook appreciably. Average hay yields are expected, while rainy weather during blossoming time has impaired the fruit crop outlook.

Finland: Though rainfall during spring and early summer was very uneven, ground moisture at the end of June was satisfactory. Crop outlook figures indicated grain and potato yields somewhat above average, while fodder roots were slightly below. Both hay and pasture were also above normal.

### CENTRAL EUROPE

Bizonal Germany: Extremely dry weather has prevailed in central and southern areas since the middle of June, while the north has had heavy rains and cool weather, which caused some lodging of grain, particularly of rye. Nevertheless, yields of breadgrains and of coarse grains are expected to approximate those of last year. Grains are ripening quickly, and harvesting of barley and rye is under way with wheat and oats to follow shortly. Rain is badly needed for roots and hay in the central and southern parts of the Bizone. As of July 1, yields of potatoes and sugar beets were not expected to reach the 1948 level. Prospects for oilseed production, however, are considerably better than a year ago.

Austria: The 1949 harvest still promises to be the best of the postwar years. In spite of frequent rains which caused some lodging, the condition of wheat and rye is indicated as very good, with yields expected to be substantially higher than last year's. A larger acreage

is also indicated. The condition of the main potato crop is good to very good. Sugar beets are progressing well with considerably higher yields expected than in 1948. The first cutting of hay has been completed; the crop was much larger than last year's although some deterioration in quality occurred because of wetness. Pasture conditions are reported as very good.

Switzerland: Although crop prospects at the end of June were about the same as for 1948, the continuing dry spell in July was generally unfavorable for cereals, second crop hay, and potatoes. The first cutting of hay was very good. Sugar production was expected to equal the postwar average. A good-sized cherry crop has been harvested and pear production will be slightly larger than last year. The apple crop will be smaller.

Czechoslovakia: Extended rainy weather in June delayed farm work and caused some lodging of heavy grain. With dry and sunny weather and intermittent showers in July, however, a very good harvest is now under way. The potato and sugar beet crops have been developing very favorably. A heavy first cutting of hay has been completed despite some spoilage resulting from the rain. The second hay crop and pastures are in very good condition.

Poland: Definite information is not available on growing conditions in July. As of July 1, crop prospects were good on the whole. Cold, rainy weather in June benefited the potato crop and improved prospects for sugar beet yields, though the absence of sun may reduce the sugar content. On the other hand, the quality of the hay was adversely affected by the rain. Harvesting of grain crops may also have been retarded somewhat.

#### SOUTHERN EUROPE

Portugal: Rains in early July delayed the harvesting of small grains, but output is still expected to be better than last year although below the prewar level. Rice production will be down, however, as lack of water caused a sharp decrease in the acreage planted. The first estimate for olive oil placed production at nearly 150 percent above last year's exceedingly small output. Some increase in production is also anticipated for wine.

Spain: Both crops and pastures benefited from rains in June. Temperatures reached record levels in several parts of Spain during the first few days but heavy rains, which delayed harvesting, were reported in the second week. Cereal-grain output is still expected to be not much more than three-fourths as large as in 1948. The rains improved the prospects for olives, almonds, grapes, and other late crops.

Italy: Growing conditions during June were generally favorable, but since July 1 the weather has been hot and dry. Returns from scattered wheat-harvesting areas indicate a good harvest even in some sections which were previously reported to have suffered most from the drought. Present indications are that the crop will exceed that of last year. Satisfactory crops of potatoes and sugar beets are foreseen, while production of rice is expected to be moderately below last year. Production

prospects for deciduous fruits and nuts are reported better than last year, with the exception of almonds. The latest official estimate is for a better-than-average olive crop. The condition of forage crops, first cuttings of which were poor due to the drought, improved considerably with the advent of rains.

Greece: Crop prospects have improved as a result of favorable weather conditions in the spring and early summer. The wheat-crop estimate has been revised upward, though production is still expected to be well below last year's level. A bumper olive oil output is anticipated. Rains in June and July benefited corn, potatoes, tobacco, and vegetables. Pastures and hay crops also show improvement.

#### SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE

Rumania: The condition of spring-seeded crops and pastures has improved and prospects for deciduous fruit continue good. However, heavy rains and low temperatures during June delayed the cultivation of row crops and fostered growth of weeds.

Hungary: Abundant rains during May and June favored crop development. The wheat harvest, which is nearing completion, promises to be the best since the war. Rye yields are expected to be satisfactory. The outlook for fruit is for a better production than that obtained for many previous years. Grape production is expected to be 25 percent larger than last year. A 10 percent expansion in sugar beet acreage indicates the largest sugar production since the war.

Bulgaria: The harvest of barley, wheat and rye is now under way. While in some sections crops are below normal due to winter and early spring drought followed by too much rain, in general fields appear to be in excellent condition. Corn and other row crops and rice are developing well.

Yugoslavia: Rains during June and July have been very beneficial to both winter and spring-sown crops. Winter wheat yields will probably be above those for 1948 and prospects for spring-sown small grains and corn are very good. Harvest of barley and wheat was begun during the first part of July.

#### SOVIET UNION

Good condition or yields of grain crops were officially reported for most of the regions of the Soviet Union. However, widespread continued rains and cool weather in the European part of the country, which were beneficial to crops and even badly needed in some regions in June, delayed the ripening and harvesting of grain in the first part of July. Weather during the latter part of July was more favorable to harvesting, though operations were frequently interrupted by intermittent rains.

Reports from southern regions, where harvesting is proceeding, indicate difficulties with wet and lodged grain, uneven ripening, low stand of the grain and shattering. Almost simultaneous maturing of spring and winter grains in some regions is complicating the present

harvest situation. A serious lag in combine harvesting was reported from a number of regions. Weedy fields have presented a serious problem this year in the case of a number of crops. Indications are that harvesting losses, which are usually high in the Soviet Union, may be even heavier than usual, thus reducing the actual "barn yard" of grain and other crops.

Haying and silage operations were lagging in most regions. Sunflowers, which provide the principal Russian oilseed crop, sugar beets, flax, and vegetables, are claimed to be growing well after June rains, though potatoes may be suffering from excess of rain.

